OUR personal life in the United States has lacked dramatic high lights. After our long wandering, we at last became a part of a great country and shared its hopes and anguish at the time of its "rendezvous with destiny." Our only noteworthy adventure in these years has been the discovery of America.

I know from books that this discovery is usually credited to Columbus, but the Admiral did not see much of the New World—nothing but islands in the Caribbean and a stretch of the mainland that he believed to be some offshore island of China. America has been discovered step by step by the generations of pioneers who helped to build it. But have they discovered all the New World? Will its discovery ever be completed?

When we left Europe we were not wholly ignorant about the United States, but many of our notions proved wrong. Moreover, looking at the United States through Russian-European eyes, we have seen many things in a different light from that in which they appear to people born and reared in this country. We have been impressed by things that native Americans take for granted and unmoved by other things that seem very important to them. Our America, the America we see and love, is tinged with our experience. Talking, lecturing, and writing about America abroad, I have often felt that the America we have discovered is different in many respects from its widely distributed portraits.

THE GATEWAY TO THE NEW WORLD

The towering skyscrapers of Manhattan that greeted us that sunny October morning in 1934 impressed me only moderately; I had often seen this skyline pictured in books. My overwhelming impression of New York was of bigness and confusion. The rush of the motley crowd in the streets, the stampede at the subway entrances, the roar of the Elevated, the striking contrast between the display of luxury in the shop windows of Fifth Avenue and the untidiness of the streets a few blocks away—all this was more or less in harmony with what we had expected to find in the New World. But this new world held far more for us than this conventional picture.

We met many Russians in New York—the older generation of refugees from Jewish pogroms, people who had left Russia after the revolution of 1905, the new refugees who had fled from the Communist regime. Some made their living the hard way, others had settled down and found security, a few seemed to be wholly success-